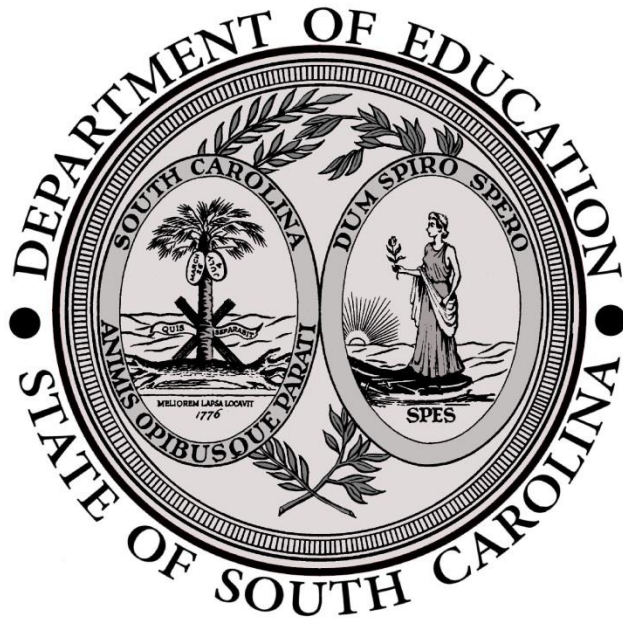


# **South Carolina Uniform Grading Policy**



**Issued by the  
South Carolina Department of Education**

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## Contents

The Legislative Mandate .....	1
Grade Point Conversion Chart .....	2
Computing Grade Point Averages .....	3
Courses Carrying Carnegie Units .....	4
Middle Level and Junior High Schools .....	4
Reporting .....	4
Honors Courses .....	5
Dual Credit Courses .....	5
Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Courses .....	6
End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) Courses and the Credit Recovery Option .....	6
Converting Grades on Transcripts .....	7
Withdrawing from a Course .....	8
Retaking a Course .....	9



## **The Legislative Mandate**

S.C. Code Ann. § 59-5-68 (2004) reads as follows:

The General Assembly finds that given the fact the State provides substantial financial academic assistance to students of the State based on cumulative grade point averages and districts currently use a variety of grading scales, it is in the best interest of the students of South Carolina for a uniform grading scale to be developed and adopted by the State Board of Education to be implemented in all public schools of the State. Therefore, the State Board of Education is directed to establish a task force comprised of superintendents, principals, teachers, and representatives of school boards and higher education no later than June 30, 1999. The task force shall make recommendations to the board including, but not limited to, the following: consistent numerical breaks for letter grades; consideration of standards to define an honors course; appropriate weighting of courses; and determination of courses and weightings to be used in the calculation of class rank. The task force shall report its findings to the State Board of Education no later than December 1, 1999. The State Board of Education shall then adopt and school districts of the State shall begin using the adopted grading scale no later than the 2000-2001 school year.

The State Board of Education adopted a uniform grading policy for South Carolina's public schools in December 1999. That policy, which applied to all students who first enrolled in the ninth grade in the 2000–01 school year, was revised in 2007 and modified in 2016. The particulars of the state's revised uniform grading policy are set forth in the pages that follow here.

The modified uniform grading scale and the system for calculating grade point averages (GPAs) and class rank will be effective for all students beginning in the 2016–17 school year. Recalculations will be limited to the use of the three-decimal-place conversion factors specified in the South Carolina uniform grading policy's grade point conversion chart. Increased quality points for dual credit courses and full credit for dual credit courses will not be figured into recalculations.

## Grade Point Conversion Chart

### 10 Point Grading Scale

South Carolina Uniform Grading Scale Conversions				
Numerical Average	Letter Grade	College Prep Weighting	Honors Weighting	AP/IB/Dual Credit Weighting
100	A	5.000	5.500	6.000
99	A	4.900	5.400	5.900
98	A	4.800	5.300	5.800
97	A	4.700	5.200	5.700
96	A	4.600	5.100	5.600
95	A	4.500	5.000	5.500
94	A	4.400	4.900	5.400
93	A	4.300	4.800	5.300
92	A	4.200	4.700	5.200
91	A	4.100	4.600	5.100
90	A	4.000	4.500	5.000
89	B	3.900	4.400	4.900
88	B	3.800	4.300	4.800
87	B	3.700	4.200	4.700
86	B	3.600	4.100	4.600
85	B	3.500	4.000	4.500
84	B	3.400	3.900	4.400
83	B	3.300	3.800	4.300
82	B	3.200	3.700	4.200
81	B	3.100	3.600	4.100
80	B	3.000	3.500	4.000
79	C	2.900	3.400	3.900
78	C	2.800	3.300	3.800
77	C	2.700	3.200	3.700
76	C	2.600	3.100	3.600
75	C	2.500	3.000	3.500
74	C	2.400	2.900	3.400
73	C	2.300	2.800	3.300
72	C	2.200	2.700	3.200
71	C	2.100	2.600	3.100
70	C	2.000	2.500	3.000
69	D	1.900	2.400	2.900
68	D	1.800	2.300	2.800
67	D	1.700	2.200	2.700
66	D	1.600	2.100	2.600
65	D	1.500	2.000	2.500
64	D	1.400	1.900	2.400
63	D	1.300	1.800	2.300
62	D	1.200	1.700	2.200
61	D	1.100	1.600	2.100
60	D	1.000	1.500	2.000
59	F	0.900	1.400	1.900
58	F	0.800	1.300	1.800
57	F	0.700	1.200	1.700

56	F	0.600	1.100	1.600
55	F	0.500	1.000	1.500
54	F	0.400	0.900	1.400
53	F	0.300	0.800	1.300
52	F	0.200	0.700	1.200
51	F	0.100	0.600	1.100
0-50	F	0.000	0.000	0.000
WF	F	0.000	0.000	0.000
WP	-	0.000	0.000	0.000

## Computing Grade Point Averages

GPA's already earned by students will be recalculated on the basis of the revised policy's three-decimal-point scale.

All South Carolina public schools will use the following formula to compute all GPA's:

$$\text{GPA} = \frac{\text{sum (quality points x units)}}{\text{sum of units attempted}}$$

### STUDENT EXAMPLE

Course Taken	Numerical Average	Quality Points	Unit
English 1	91	4.100	1
Algebra 1	87	3.700	1
Physical Science	94	4.400	1
World Geography, Honors	83	3.300	1
Physical Education	92	4.200	1
French 1	84	3.400	1

### COMPUTATION

Quality Points	Units	
4.100	x 1.0	= 4.100
3.700	x 1.0	= 3.700
4.400	x 1.0	= 4.400
3.300	x 1.0	= 3.300
4.200	x 1.0	= 4.000
3.400	x 1.0	= 3.400
sum of units attempted	→ <b>6.0</b>	<b>22.900</b> ← sum of quality points x units

$\frac{\text{sum of quality points x units}}{\text{divided by sum of units attempted}} \quad 22.900 \div 6.0 = \mathbf{3.8166} \rightarrow \text{student's GPA}$

### **Computations will not be rounded to a higher number.**

The establishment of criteria for determining honors graduates, including the valedictorian or salutatorian, is a local decision. Local boards may establish earlier cutoffs (e.g., the seventh semester of high school, the third nine weeks of the senior year) when ranking students for any local purpose. However, class rank for LIFE Scholarships is determined at the conclusion of the spring semester of the senior year.

## **Courses Carrying Carnegie Units**

The uniform grading scale and the system for calculating GPAs and class rank will apply to all courses carrying Carnegie units, including units earned at the middle or junior high school level.

### **Middle Level and Junior High Schools**

Middle school students who are accelerated beyond middle school level courses must demonstrate the ability to accelerate based upon criteria established by the local district that provides clear standards for accelerating the student above grade level in a given course. The number of high school credits allowed at the middle school and junior high school level is a local decision. Courses receiving high school credit must be legitimate high school courses from the state course activity code manual and must reflect full coverage of the standards associated with the high school course. The high school courses offered in the middle school or junior high must be limited to core courses, career and technology education courses, and foreign language courses which are currently in the 9–12 Activity Coding System per Regulation 43-232 (B). A middle school may not use middle school courses with middle school standards to receive high school credit.

All middle school courses for which a student has received high school credit from an accredited public school (both in and out of district), will transfer with the student and must be transcribed to conform to the South Carolina uniform grading policy.

### **Reporting**

All report cards and transcripts will use numerical grades for courses carrying Carnegie units. Transcripts and report cards will specify the course title and the level or type of course the student has taken (e.g., English 1, Algebra 2 honors, AP U.S. History). The current grading scale must be printed on the report card.

## **Honors Courses**

Honors courses, which extend and deepen the opportunities provided by courses at the high school level, are designed for students exhibiting superior abilities in the particular content area. The honors curriculum places emphasis on critical and analytical thinking, rational decision making, and inductive and deductive reasoning. The goal of this policy is to be rigorous and uniform while allowing for local decision-making.

School districts may designate honors courses and give the assigned weighting under the following conditions:

- A. An honors course must have a published syllabus that verifies rigor sufficiently beyond the College Preparatory (CP) requirements.
- B. Textbooks and other course materials must be differentiated and more rigorous than those used in CP courses.
- C. Honors courses may be offered in English, mathematics, science, and social studies. Honors weighting may be designated in other content areas for the third and fourth level of the courses, provided that the two above standards are met. Honors weighting may not be designated in any physical education courses.

One half of a quality point (.5) is added to the CP weighting for honors courses that meet the three criteria listed above. These criteria apply to all courses, including those offered online and in other nontraditional settings and those recorded on a transcript from an out-of-state school that is accredited under the regulations of the board of education of that state or the appropriate regional accrediting agency: the New England Association of Colleges and Schools, the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the Western Association of Colleges and Schools, or the Northwest Association of Colleges and School (as specified in State Board Regulation 43-273, Transfers and Withdrawals).

## **Dual Credit Courses**

Dual credit courses—whether they are taken at the school where the student is enrolled or at a postsecondary institution—are those courses for which the student has been granted permission by his or her home school to earn both Carnegie units and college credit for those particular courses.

One quality point is added to the CP weighting for dual credit courses that are applicable to baccalaureate degrees or to associate degrees offered by accredited institutions (see State Board of Education Regulation 43-234, Defined Program, Grades 9–12, and Regulation 43-259, Graduation Requirements).

College orientation courses offered by postsecondary institutions carry CP weighting and do not receive honors or dual credit quality points.



## **Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Courses**

The following criteria apply to the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) courses and to International Baccalaureate (IB) courses—including those offered online and in other nontraditional settings and those recorded on a transcript from an out-of-state school that is accredited under the regulations of the board of education of that state or the appropriate regional accrediting agency: the New England Association of Colleges and Schools, the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the Western Association of Colleges and Schools, or the Northwest Association of Colleges and School (as specified in State Board Regulation 43-273, Transfers and Withdrawals).

- Only AP or IB courses can be awarded a full quality point above the CP weighting. Seminar or support courses for AP or IB may be weighted as honors but not as AP or IB courses.
- An AP course can carry only *one* quality point.
- A standard-level (SL) IB course can carry only *one* quality point. However, two quality points of IB credit can be granted for higher-level (HL) courses in the IB program that require a minimum of 240 hours of instruction.

## **End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) Courses and the Credit Recovery Option**

Students who are enrolled in courses requiring state end-of-course examinations must take the examinations and fulfill all requirements outlined in Regulation 43-262.4. Students will be allowed to take the examination only *once*, at the end of the regular course duration and not at the end of an extended period granted through the credit recovery option. Students who repeat the course must be treated as though they are taking the course for the first time, and all requirements will apply.

## **Converting Grades on Transcripts**

### **Out of State, Non-Public Schools**

When transcripts are received from accredited out-of-state schools (or in state from accredited sources other than the public schools) and numerical averages are provided, those averages must be used in transferring the grades to the student's record. If letter grades with no numerical averages are provided, this conversion will apply: A = 95, B = 85, C = 75, D = 65, F = 51. If the transcript indicates that the student has earned a passing grade in any course in which he or she had a numerical average lower than 60, that average will be converted to a 63 numerical grade on the new scale. See State Board of Education Regulation 43-273 for complete information on transfers and withdrawals. The criteria for accepting transcripts from homeschools are a local decision.

### **Pass (P)/Fail (F) Grades**

If the transcript shows that the student has earned a grade of P (pass), that grade will be converted to a numerical designation on the basis of information secured from the sending institution as to the appropriate numerical value of the P. If no numerical average can be obtained from the sending institution, the student's cumulative transfer GPA will be calculated and the corresponding number equivalent will be assigned to replace the P. (For example, if a student transfers with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 on the CP scale, the grade of P would be converted to an 85. In other words, grades of P will neither positively nor negatively impact the student's transfer GPA.)

## **Withdrawing from a Course**

With the first day of enrollment in the course as the baseline, students who withdraw from a course within three days in a 45-day course, five days in a 90-day course, or ten days in a 180-day course will do so without penalty.

Students who withdraw from a course after the specified time of three days in a 45-day course, five days in a 90-day course, or ten days in a 180-day course shall be assigned a WF, and the F (as a 51) will be calculated in the student's overall grade point average.

The three-, five-, and ten-day limitations for withdrawing from a course without penalty do not apply to course or course level changes approved by the administration of a school. Withdrawal limitations for distance learning courses will be established by local districts.

Students who drop out of school or are expelled after the allowed period for withdrawal but before the end of the grading period will be assigned grades in accordance with the following policies:

- The student will receive a WP if he or she was passing the course. The grade of WP will carry no Carnegie units and no quality points to be factored into the student's GPA.
- The student will receive a WF if he or she was failing the course. The grade of WF will carry no Carnegie units but will be factored into the student's GPA as a 51.

If a student fails a course due to excessive absences, an FA will be recorded on his or her transcript. The grade of FA will carry no Carnegie units but will be factored into the student's GPA as a 51.

## **Retaking a Course**

Students in grades nine through twelve may retake a course at the same level of difficulty if they have earned a D or an F in that course. The student's record will reflect all courses he or she has taken and the grades he or she has earned.

The student may retake the course either during the current school year or during the next school year but no later than that second year. In addition, the student must retake the course before he or she has enrolled in the next sequential course (unless the student is granted approval by school administration to do so).

A student who has taken a course for a Carnegie unit prior to his or her ninth grade year may retake that course regardless of the grade he or she has earned. In such a case, only the retake grade will be used in figuring the student's GPA, and only the retake attempt will show on the transcript. This rule will apply whether the retake grade is higher or lower than the grade the student previously earned.